

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method for conferring tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in a monocotyledonous plant comprising:

transforming the monocotyledonous plant with ~~an expression cassette a~~ plasmid comprising ~~at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, a minimal promoter, and a DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in plants, wherein the plasmid is selected from the group consisting of pJS112, pJP21, and pJPM001 at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and a DNA molecule are operably linked together to permit expression of the DNA molecule, and wherein the minimal promoter is Act1-100 of rice, a truncated  $\alpha$ -amylase promoter of barley or rice which retains its function, a truncated maize ubiquitin promoter which retains its function, or a truncated CaMV 35S promoter which retains its function; and~~

expressing the DNA molecule in the monocotyledonous plant to confer tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in the plant.

2. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the monocotyledonous plant is selected from the group consisting of rice, wheat, maize, barley, oat, rye, millet, and sorghum.

3. (previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein the monocotyledonous plant is rice.

4-9 (canceled)

10. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said transforming comprises:

propelling particles at cells of the monocotyledonous plant under conditions effective for the particles to penetrate into the cell interior and

introducing a the plasmid ~~comprising the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and the DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in plants~~ into the cell interior.

11. (canceled)

12. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the plasmid is associated with the particles, whereby the plasmid is carried into the cell interior together with the particles.

13. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the plasmid surrounds the cell and is drawn into the cell interior with the particles.

14. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said transforming comprises:

contacting tissue of the monocotyledonous plant with an inoculum of a bacterium of the genus *Agrobacterium*, wherein the bacterium is transformed with a the plasmid ~~comprising the at least one abscisic acid response complex unit, the minimal promoter, and the DNA molecule that increases tolerance to salt stress and drought stress in~~ plants.

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the bacterium of the genus *Agrobacterium* is *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 14, wherein the tissue is selected from protoplasts, cells, or calli derived from mature embryo or immature embryo of rice, wheat, maize, barley, oat, rye, millet, or sorghum.

18-38 (canceled)

39. (currently amended) The method according to claim 38 1, wherein the plasmid is pJS112.

40. (currently amended) The method according to claim 38 1, wherein the plasmid is pJP21.

41. (currently amended) The method according to claim 38 1, wherein the plasmid is pJPM001.

42-47 (canceled)